

but unfortunately only small specimens could be reached. The rattans are a serious obstacle in excursions in the forests. The tendrils of these trailing and climbing palms are beset with rows of recurved hooks, which, as they are drawn across the explorer's flesh in a dash made to get a shot at a bird, or by a stumble, cut into it as readily as knives, and inflict a more unpleasant wound.

An immense tree with a tall stem free from branches, until at a great height it spreads out into a wide and evenly shaped crown, was full of the nests of the Metallic Starling (*Calornis metallica*), a very beautiful small starling with dark plumage, which displays a brilliant purple metallic glance all over its surface. The Starlings breed thus gregariously; there must have been three or four hundred nests in the tree, every available branch being full of them. The birds were busy flying to and fro, and were quite safe, for the tree was so high that they were out of shot.

On one of the excursions in the forest a flock of brilliant plumaged parrots was met with, apparently feeding in company with a flock of white cockatoos. One of the parrots was successfully stalked and shot, whereupon the cockatoos set up the most angry harsh screaming, evidently making common cause with the parrots. They sat and screamed at the shooter on a tree close by, as angrily as if one of their own flock had been shot, and then flew overhead high up out of reach of the gun, looking down at the dead bird and still screaming.

The splendid large Bird-winged Butterfly (*Ornithoptera poseidon*), with brilliant green and velvety black wings, was common in the woods, but flew high and was difficult to catch. One or two were shot with dust shot, without their being utterly damaged, but the best chance of catching them is when a flock of males can be met with, fluttering round and mobbing a single female; they are then hovering slowly, quite close to the ground, and can easily be caught. The female has thus a large body of gaudy admirers from which to make her choice. Interesting results might possibly be derived from a series of experiments in which, in the case of brightly coloured and decorated butterflies, the colours should be rubbed off the wings of a few amongst a number of males, or painted over of a black or brown colour. It might be tested whether the females would always prefer the brightly coloured ones, and dark coloured butterflies might have the wings of the male touched up with a little colour.

A Snake (*Dipsas arruensis*) was obtained at Wokan. Amongst the insects collected were three new species of Lepidoptera,<sup>1</sup> viz., *Thanaos inornatus*, *Plesioneura proserpina*, and *Papilio alcidinus*, the last of which furnishes an interesting case of mimicry, which will be alluded to in the sequel (p. 581); a new species of Coleoptera (*Cautires amabilis*), and specimens of *Telephorus præustus*, Guérin, which have been made the type of a new genus (*Sphærarthrum*) by Mr. Waterhouse.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A. G. Butler, *Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist.*, sér. 5, vol. xi, pp. 423, 424, 1881.

<sup>2</sup> C. O. Waterhouse, *Ibid.*, vol. xiii, pp. 280-282, 1881.